



Accessibility Policy Recommendations, Precious Blake Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, Dan Leonard Assistant Attorney General, Laila Atallah

The following proposals are a direct result of the public editing process for Accessibility at MSAC. The editing process included over 25 editors, ranging from artists with disabilities, representation from arts organizations and programs (including Maryland stakeholders), and representation from The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council and Maryland Assistive Technology Program. All recommendations have been approved by the Assistant Attorney General.

Current Language	Proposed Language
<p>Definition of Accessibility</p> <p>None.</p>	<p>Definition of Accessibility in the Arts</p> <p>Accessibility in the Arts ensures inclusive, mutually beneficial, and meaningful participation for everyone in all cultural and creative spaces by providing full access both physically and programmatically.</p> <p>Accessibility in the Arts is a continuously evolving and malleable process that holistically considers the body and mind for both audiences and artists with diverse needs. Full access will create ecosystems and cultures that are safe and welcoming to all.</p> <p><i>*This definition will be used across programs and available in an organization-wide glossary at msac.org.</i></p>

Current Language	Proposed Language
<p>Accessibility Policy</p> <p>The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal civil rights law designed to prevent discrimination and enable individuals with disabilities to participate fully in all aspects of society. The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) is committed to making our programs and services accessible to all stakeholders. MSAC events are open to the public and located at accessible venues. Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities are available upon request.</p>	<p>Accessibility Policy</p> <p>The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) is committed to making sure all Marylanders can access our programs and services. Everyone is welcome, and all events and activities sponsored by or operated within MSAC are fully accessible both physically and programmatically. MSAC complies with all applicable disability-related statutes and regulations and seeks to ensure meaningful participation by all Marylanders regardless of need or ability.</p> <p>MSAC has designated an Accessibility Coordinator to oversee and advise on accommodations organization-wide.</p>

Current Language	Proposed Language
<p>Accommodations Request Form</p> <p>None.</p> <p>Guests with accessibility questions or who require additional assistance call 410-767-6476 or email precious.blake@maryland.gov.</p>	<p>Accommodations Request Form</p> <p>MSAC encourages guests to fill out an Accommodation Request form or contact the Accessibility Coordinator at least two weeks before any MSAC event date or application deadline. We will work to fulfill any requests we receive at any time.</p> <p>Access the Accommodation Request Form: bit.ly/MSACAccomodations</p> <p>If you require additional assistance may call TTY: Maryland Relay at 1-800-735-2258 or 711 or contact the accessibility coordinator at 410-767-6476 or precious.blake@maryland.gov.</p>

Current Language

Accessibility Requirements for MSAC Grantees

None stated on msac.org.

In Grant Guidelines:

Grantees must comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which states that no otherwise qualified person shall, solely by reason of his or her handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination related to, the arts.

In Grant Agreement Forms:

Fair Practices Certification. Grantee certifies that it prohibits, and covenants that it will continue to prohibit, discrimination on the basis of: (a) political or religious opinion or affiliation, marital status, race, color, creed, or national origin; or (b) sex or age, except when age or sex constitutes a bona fide occupational qualification; or (c) the physical or mental handicap of a qualified handicapped individual. Upon the request of MSAC, Grantee will submit to MSAC information relating to its operations, with regard to political or religious opinion or affiliation, marital status, physical or mental handicap, race, color, creed, sex, age, or national origin.

Proposed Language

Accessibility Requirements for MSAC Grantees

Grantees must ensure that any programming remains accessible to all, and if needed, conduct programs in accessible venues other than their own organization in order to meet accessibility requirements. Grantees are required to:

1. Comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991, as amended.
2. Prohibit discrimination on the basis of: (a) political or religious opinion or affiliation, marital status, race, color, creed, sexual orientation, or national origin; or (b) gender expression, sex, or age, except when age or sex constitute a bona fide occupational qualification; or (c) the disability of a qualified individual.
3. Designate an Accessibility Point of Contact to ensure compliance, receive accommodation requests, and document grievances, and Publish direct contact information for the Point of Contact to the public.
4. Create and publicly share a grievance procedure to allow stakeholders to address any events or programs that are inaccessible.
5. Upon request, submit documentation of its operations and compliance with the above.

**This accessibility requirement statement for MSAC grantees will live on msac.org, in grant guidelines, and grant agreement forms.*

Current Language	Proposed Language
<p>Grievance Procedures</p> <p>None.</p>	<p>Feedback Procedures</p> <p>If guests would like to provide general feedback to MSAC about accessibility for MSAC’s programs or programs funded by MSAC, contact the Accessibility Coordinator at 410-767-6476 or email precious.blake@maryland.gov.</p> <p>Grievance Procedures</p> <p>For programs or services provided by MSAC</p> <p>If a program or service operated by MSAC, facilities operated by MSAC, or public meetings conducted by MSAC are inaccessible to persons with a disability or is illegally discriminatory and you want to file a grievance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● If you have any questions or would like to discuss the situation before filing a grievance, contact the Accessibility Coordinator.● To file a formal grievance, contact Dan Leonard, Director of EEO & Fair Practices and ADA Coordinator: daniel.leonard@maryland.gov

Current Language	Proposed Language
<p>Grievance Procedures (cont.)</p> <p>None.</p>	<p>Grievance Procedures (cont.)</p> <p>For programs or services that are not provided by, but are funded by MSAC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate the grievance to the sponsoring organization.• If you think your grievance was not handled appropriately by the sponsoring organization, or if you have not received a response from the organization within thirty (30) days, contact MSAC’s Accessibility Coordinator to file a formal grievance at 410-767-6476 or precious.blake@maryland.gov. <p>MSAC will work with you to provide assistance as appropriate.</p>

Current Language	Revision Proposal
<p data-bbox="63 349 708 396">Equity and Justice Statement</p> <p data-bbox="63 449 1159 1063">MSAC celebrates our state's diversity and promotes the role of the arts to connect people, bridge our differences, and inspire an appreciation of our shared humanity. Because the arts have the power to transform individuals and communities, MSAC is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of our organization and across all the communities of our state, and in supporting our partners in modeling the same commitment.</p>	<p data-bbox="1202 349 1847 396">Equity and Justice Statement</p> <p data-bbox="1202 478 2476 1092">The arts celebrate our state’s diversity, connect our shared humanity, and transform individuals and communities. The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) and its supporting collaborators are committed to advancing and modeling equity, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion in all aspects of our organizations and across communities of our state. MSAC and its grantees are committed to embracing equity and non-discrimination regardless of race, religious creed, color, age, gender expression, sexual orientation, class, language, and/or ability.</p>

Current Language	Proposed Language
<p>Accessibility Web Page</p> <p>MSAC has a dedicated accessibility page on msac.org that includes contact information for the accessibility coordinator, accessing documents in different formats, and accessibility resources.</p>	<p>Accessibility Web Page</p> <p>MSAC has a dedicated accessibility page on msac.org that includes contact information for the accessibility coordinator, federal and state regulations, the organization's Equity and Justice statement, grievance procedures, an emergency preparedness plan, accommodation policies, and other accessibility resources for artists and arts organizations, and PECS images.</p> <p>*This is a statement of what will live on MSAC’s new website*</p>

Future Considerations

Accessibility Implementation Plan: www.msac.org/accessibility

Accessibility Questions for MSAC Grant Applications

In FY22, MSAC will use these questions to determine professional development opportunities and technical assistance grantees may need to achieve greater accessibility. In FY23, MSAC will revisit the PPE Committee for approval to introduce the questions into all MSAC applications and rubrics.

1. State your Point of Contact for accessibility needs. Include Name, Title, and Contact information.
2. Explain how the programmatic aspects of your project will be accessible (including preparation, implementation, and for any people involved.)
3. Explain how the location of your project will be physically accessible for audience, participants and artists (including historic facilities and/or outside spaces.)
4. How, if at all, were individuals with disabilities included in the planning and implementation of this project?

Special Request Grant Eligibility, Dana Parsons

Following up from the previous Council Meeting, the following revisions increase transparency in the application process regarding eligibility for funding in the Special Request Grant Program.





Current Language

Arts organizations or Programs may apply for Special Request Grants to support:

- Needs that may fall outside of the eligibility of MSAC's established grant programs.

Proposed Language

Arts organizations or Programs may apply for Special Request Grants to support:

- Needs that may fall outside of the eligibility of MSAC's established grant programs, including to support engagement of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.
 - *Note for current GFO (Grants for Organizations) recipients: The proposal cannot provide earned income that would increase the GFO award amounts.*
- Establish community support through financial contributions and/or partnership agreements specific to the proposed activity.



Proposed Language

Arts organizations or Programs may apply for Special Request Grants to support:

- Needs that may fall outside of the eligibility of MSAC's established grant programs, including to support engagement of BIPOC constituents (Black, Indigenous, People of Color).
 - *Note for current GFO (Grants for Organizations) recipients: The proposal cannot provide earned income that would increase the GFO award amounts.*
- Establish community support through financial contributions and/or partnership agreements specific to the proposed activity.

Justification

- Increase focus on MSAC's strategic plan and commitment to equity and justice through special request funding.
 - Language approved by Assistant Attorney General.
- Increase transparency in the eligibility stage, allowing for applicant time and capacity to be honored.
- Mirror Council recommendations in the eligibility guidelines.
- Remove the possibility of double funding for organizations within the GFO program.



New Business

Special Request Grants <5K





Special Grant Requests <5K

Olny Theatre- \$5K

- **Just Arts Program support**

Imagination Stage - \$5K

- **Arts for Change to virtual platform**

Baltimore Choral Arts Society - \$5K

- **Off the Grid series support**